(received your 11/4/71 letter last night)

Nov 9, 1971

Dear Harold,

Your accusatory letters come across like a shot-gun blast, leaving me in a dilemma. Shall I address myself to every shot that whistles by? To do so would lead to a twenty or thirty page letter. I could answer by picking out those points which are clearly wrong or insulting, but then you could ~~[illegible]~~ reply that I had ignored the points where you are right. If I picked only those which are correct, then you will ask why I continue to disagree with you when I admit I am wrong on every point. If I pick a sample of points which are right and are wrong, I am sure you will then say I am ignoring the best points you made.

In light of this letter, I can now see why most of the people you criticize fail to reply to you. Nevertheless, the letter is a beautiful example of why I do not want to edit one of your books unless I am given a great deal of freedom to restructure your arguments. Your genius lies in finding every conceivable argument (and bit of evidence) relevant to ~~a point~~ an issue; your weakness lies in being unable to select those which are the most convincing and to leave out those which are wrong or of lesser significance.

To offer Post Mortem as it now stands is like

opening a crate containing a hi-fi set which is unassembled and in which a large number of spare parts are mixed in. Those who love hi fi sets will probably not care that it is unassembled. Those who dislike hi-fi would not ~~like it~~ be interested even if it were assembled. But in my view there are a large number of people who are interested in hi fi but will ~~not~~ put the crate aside in dismay in spite of the high quality of the component parts.

I think there are possibilities for collaboration if we can agree roughly on the sound we want to produce. When we started in Sept I think neither of us saw the problems clearly enough. You said several times that you were not ~~one~~ very interested in reading what I produce, leading me to think that you had no great interest in how I reassembled your work so long as you were able to publish your full version in the form you liked. I on the other hand did not clearly show you how much reorganization I thought was necessary, nor did I realize that we might disagree on some of the major themes of the book.

It is clear to me that our original agree-

ment will not work as it stands. We will only end up disappointing or enraging each other as we continue to try to bridge a gulf which is much too wide. For this reason I am searching for alternate solutions. In my letter of Nov 2 I made the mistake of setting out an idea as though it were the final offer. Let me therefore summarize what I intended and add ~~to~~ 2 more possibilities

1. I give you the money to publish Post Mortem privately now and you allow me to use the documents and material to write my own book. In this book I will give you whatever credit you want.
2. We work as editor-author under the original agreement, except that differences between you and me over final form and content will be resolved by a five person committee ~~of~~ (eg Gary Schoener, Howard Roffman, Sylvia Meagher, you and me).
3. I will provide the funds necessary ~~for~~ to support someone while they edit Post Mortem into a somewhat more manageable book. Although I have no idea if Howard Roffman would be willing, I think he would be ideal to do this since he apparently accepts your views about an author-editor agreement and since he has emphasized the need for all of us to make sacrifices to help you with your work (you and Lil

have already made untold sacrifices).

I hope that one of these three alternatives may appeal to you. Should we be able to agree on one of them after filling in the details, then we could sign a contract binding ~~ourself~~ ourselves to it, something we did not do with the Sept agreement.

I obviously have my views as to how each of the three approaches should be undertaken. You have already received an outline with regard to suggestion #1; obviously I am willing to discuss modifications in that outline. With regard to suggestions #2 & 3 I shall give some details now, but they should not be taken as something set in my mind, except for one major point regarding #2.

I am interested in #2 only if we can assure that the decision of a majority of the committee is final. Both of us run a risk in this, since we may be outvoted on matters we see as critical. Nevertheless, if we both pose as being more interested in the case than in our own egos, then I think we should be willing to subject ourselves to the judgment of others

so long as their understanding of the case and their integrity are as high as that of the people I have listed.

In proposing #3, I have in mind that someone like Howard would be able to give you the editing you so often have said you wanted. It is obvious that I am unwilling to offer money for such a book to be published until I know how it will turn out. My only reason for offering $10,000 for the full version of PM to be published was that I thought I would exercise considerable control over the form and contents of the abridgement. Thus #3 does not offer any money to help publish PM, but only money to support someone to edit it in hopes of making it more appealing to some commercial editor. A tentative budget I worked out came to $1630 ($200 living expenses for 6 months, $130 transportation, $50 telephone, $250 misc) but this is open to discussion.

I hope that one of these offers appeals to you enough so that further discussion is possible on one of them. Discussions over my moral and psychological failings interest me little. I am sure that I have probably unnecessarily added to the already great burden which you and Lil carry. For this I am truly sorry. But I have no desire to argue these points with you, given your tendency to blame

everyone but yourself and given the relish you seem to take in endless accusatory letters. I know of no man, even presidents of corporations, who claims to have as little time as you; yet I also know of no man, even someone who is retired, who has the time to write seven or ten page letters expounding upon the way others have abused him.

If you therefore find something in this letter that holds out the possibility of some form of cooperation between us, I would be very happy to hear from you. If, on the other hand, you write a long letter showing how sentence seven of page 2 contradicts sentence four of page 5 or how I show my failings or evil motives throughout ~~this letter~~ this letter, I will probably not even bother to read what you write.

Best regards,

Ted

cc: Dan
Howard
Jerry